



THE YELLA BOARD

Volume 46 Number 1

MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM
Where "I've Been Working On the
Railroad" Becomes a Reality

May
June
2013



Another jewel for the crown of the Monticello Railway Museum has been added with the addition of Stair Tower, adjacent to the Rankin Motorcar Building. These structures will become an active part of the museum's promotion of railroading.

THE CONSIST

Volume 46 No. 1

May-June

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Arrivals & Departures

	Donna McClure	President
	Bill Crisp	Vice President
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DIRECTORS

8	Dylan Cantrell	Rob Doyle	Russ Fischer
	Dale Jenkins	Stan Rankin	Jon Roma
	John Sciutto	Dennis Slone	

9

Crew Caller: Jon Roma caller@mrmm.org
217-439-8365

10

Membership Secretary: Donna McClure
(H) 217-762-2813 620 W. Main, Monticello, IL 61856

Ticket Agent- Throttle Time Coord: John Downing
(H) 217-762-9357 POB 69 White Heath, IL 61884
svtry@mail.com

11

2nd Section-Yella Board Editor: Dale Jenkins

12

(H) 217-423-ITRR 264 Victoria Ave. Decatur, IL 62522

Chief Mech Officer & Supvr Loco Engineers:

Kent McClure (H) 217-762-2813
620 Main St. Monticello, IL 61856
kemclure@mchsi.com

General Manager: Syl Keller

POB 153, Carlock, IL 61725
(H) 309-376-3361 © 217-493-1688

Gift Shop Managers: Syl Keller, Doug Butzow

Supervisor Loco Engineers: Tim Crouch
POB 92 White Heath, IL 61884
(H) 217-762-7428 crouchtnt@netzero.net

Track Superintendent: Tom Hatchard
2133 Kevin Rd. St. Louis, MO 63125
(H) 314-638-3958

Curator: Barbra Mann
222 S. Dennis St. Decatur, IL 62522
(H) 217-422-2324 mrmtrainlady@aol.com

Building & Grounds: Hank Brickman
427 Eyer St. Gibson City, IL 60936
(H) 217-784-5467 hankb28@sbcglobal.net

Signal & Communications: Neil Grant
6 Carrollton Estates Mattoon, IL 61938
(H) 217-258-8258 paradisotel@gmail.com



**THE
OBSERVATION
PLATFORM**

**John Sciutto
Director**



Thank you to all volunteers who continue to make the Monticello Railway Museum one of the best museum's around!

Turning point for Museum special Events

2013 Polar Express ticket sales was another phenomenal experience with 3,600 tickets having sold within 9-hours on June 1st. However, the continued success of this event, and positive reputation of the museum and our volunteers hinges on maintaining the magical experience, the quality and content of the event and how we handle public demand for tickets, in 2014.

Many folks who have tried for several years to obtain tickets to this popular event are having negative experiences with the event because they can't get tickets. The barrage of phone calls, e-mails, postings on various social sites, etc. have confirmed there is tremendous demand for continued ticket sales but these sales are limited by existing dates and train capacity. The museum could choose to do nothing and sell the same number of tickets in a very short time period in 2014 and have even more potential riders upset. With such demand for tickets, with no advertising, the museum is missing a huge un-tapped market to expand the event.

The officers and directors of the museum are considering adding dates and times to expand Polar Express in 2014. Any expansion of additional weekends would occur in mid-November. However, if this change were to take place, more than likely, it would be at the cost of ending the popular Ghost Train event each October. Bottom line, there are too few volunteers, and too much work load for the current Ghost Train chair, and other volunteers, to set-up, tear down and prepare for both events. There are many logistical details, potential dates and times, availability of facilities (VFW, City Annex, etc.), willingness of commitment by our volunteers and dancers, that would need to be worked out prior to making this transition.

The ending of Ghost Train would end one chapter in museum history but open up another chapter by expanding Polar Express, and subsequent revenue and good will for the museum. Additionally, this would be positively received by our many visitors who have come to cherish this extremely popular event. It is quite conceivable, and there is demand, that the museum could sell 8,000 to 10,000 tickets, depending upon number of trains and days of expanding the event. The revenue stream would be at least double from 2013. Additionally, volunteers could focus and improve upon Polar Express preparations, particularly establishing a larger, and more elaborate North Pole setting.





THE BACK SHOP

By Kent McClure
Chief Mechanical Officer

This summer has seen much progress on several fronts, not the least of which is IC diner 4112. The Spring Fling crew this year consisted of Bruce Backus, John Bratcher, Peter Nicholson, Tylene Crouch, Donna McClure, Syl Keller and Kent McClure. One of the items needing done was the reinstallation of all the windows, which was taken care of primarily by Peter and John. Tylene Crouch spent much time, along with Donna, removing old wallpaper adhesive preparatory to new finish application to the dining room walls. Tylene has also been very busy with stripping the dark purple paint from the interiors of the closets and lockers in the car so they can be refinished as the IC had

them. Floor covering for the hallway/entryways and dining room are being looked into at this time. To that end, Donna spent much time leveling the floors in the hallway, stewards area, dining room entry way, and next to the hallway side service door the dark purple paint from the interiors of the closets and lockers in the car so they can be refinished as the IC had them. Floor covering for the hallway/entryways and dining room are being looked into at this time. To that end, Donna spent much time leveling the floors in the hallway, stewards area, dining room entry way, and next to the hallway side service door. New formica, matching that applied to the lower dining room walls, has been applied to all the trim parts for the dining room and is awaiting installation. Peter spent much time cleaning up the aluminum window trim to ready it for re-application.

Bruce and Kent worked on two refrigeration units, bringing back to life one of the pantry refrigerators, and the all-important ice cream freezer. We have two additional compressor/condenser units on hand to complete the new systems for the remaining two refrigeration units, one in the pantry hallway, and one in the rear of the kitchen.

In the "two steps forward, one step back" department, the diner has given us fits recently with air conditioning issues... One was a locked-up condenser water pump, which led to a burned up pressure switch. Fortunately, we had a spare 110VDC pump/motor, but the pressure switch has turned into more of an issue, requiring an additional relay and circuit breaker to prevent a future recurrence of this condition. The other item of some aggravation was the main HVAC blower we installed in the car. This unit was, we thought, a NEW unit, but it turns out it was not. The 110VDC motor on this unit failed while interior painting was being done during some of the hotter parts of June, but fortunately did not affect the finishing of the painting project. So, with the help of Mark Weckel, Tim Jacobs, Paul Bundy and John Sciutto, the offending blower was removed, and the original blower for the car was cleaned up and modified with a three phase motor sourced from Bruce Backus and Bob Ralph, which turned out to be a near "bolt-in" replacement for the old DC motor. There was an added bonus in this change, that being the original blower is much quieter than the 110 VDC unit we had initially put in the car.

Early this past winter, the Museum placed an order with Stadco Products of Ephrata, PA, for a 55 KW under car genset for the diner. It was completed this past June, at which



John Bratcher is drilling holes for window re-tainer, while in the background Tylene Crouch is stripping old wallpaper adhesive.



A view of the new wall finish inside the diner. This is in close approximation of the look the IC had in the car, as we were unable to match the original material for a reasonable cost.

time Kent McClure made a trip to Pittsburgh to drop off air brake equipment for rebuilding at Pittsburgh Air Brake, and then went on the Ephrata to pick up the new genset, which is now onsite in the backshop. The new genset will be installed under the diner, in the place of one of the battery boxes. The genset is powered by a four cylinder, turbo charged, intercooled Deutz diesel engine. They are heavily sound deadened, and include a critical grade muffler, and extensive vibration isolation.

These units are made by STADCO specifically for application to the undersides of railroad passenger cars, and they have developed a very impressive unit in regard to its quietness and lack of transmitted vibration to the car structure. We are using the fuel tanks from one of our Swift-Premium mechanical refrigerator cars for the under-car fuel supply, with a total gallons of 300 on the car, one of the tanks being hidden in the battery box, and the other between the truck and the genset. This amount of fuel should provide about 120 hours of operation at 1/2 load on the genset.

All this equipment will be hung on the side of the car opposite the kitchen, and will make up for the removal of 16 ea. 400 lb batteries, and one battery box, which had been hung on that side of the car. When all that weight was removed, it caused the car to noticeably list toward the kitchen-side of the car. Right now, steel is being fabricated and welded under the car to support the genset and fuel tanks.

Still to be done to the diner, includes the application of all the trim that runs the length of the dining room, as well as all the window trim and curtain rods. New heater covers have been fabricated and are awaiting installation. Carpet will be applied soon, and lower wall trim in the hallway. The kitchen still needs a final clean-up to polish the stainless steel finish, and the closets and lockers will need painting when stripping of the old finish is completed. Another item to be done is re-upholstery of the chairs and lounge seats, as well as stripping of all the diner chairs. (Much paint on them too.)

In other projects, MILW NW2 #1649 has been in the shop all winter for spring work, and is still in the shop now undergoing a roots blower replacement project, as well as some exhaust manifold work and vee-way clean up. (EMD loco-



motive engines have, in the space between the cylinder banks, a space called the "vee-way".) This is where the exhaust manifolds are bolted on to the exhaust ports from the engine, and is also an area that is prone to getting very oily and dirty. If allowed to get too deep, this mess can become a fire hazard if it happens to get hot enough to ignite. So, best practice is when you have hoods off for other work, its a good idea to clean this area up while it is easy to get at. In our case, the leaky blower seals have been allowing lube oil to get pumped into the cylinders and out the stacks, with much of that oil running down the stacks and into the vee-way. Hence the need to clean out the vee-way. Rebuilt blowers are on hand now (we also discovered the blower drive hubs were badly

Above: The Root Blowers are normally mounted in this open space are being replaced with new motors. Right: The crew is lifting off the hood to reach the root motors.

worn, to the point of requiring replacement as well) and gaskets are here to start reinstallation after we get all the parts cleaned up. Many thanks to Paul Nelson for leading this project, frequently working on it by himself.





Southern Railway steam locomotive #401 has been operating with little trouble so far this year. We did discover a leak in the left steam chest lower gasket during the June operation of the loco, requiring removal of the steam chest to get at the leak. It appears the studs loosened up slightly, allowing steam pressure within the steam chest to force the copper gasket outward slightly, to where there is a groove worn in the cylinder saddle. This groove is where the steam was able to escape around the gasket, making itself known. While apart, we had the opportunity to inspect the valve, balance plate, and valve strips for wear, finding all in very good condition at this point, with no grooves or other signs of dirt or other foreign materials getting into the valves/cylinders. After closing it all back up, the loco was fired and tested prior to July's operation to assure the leak was stopped, and

while hot both sides were re-torqued to be sure there would not be a repeat occurrence. Russ Fischer and Brian Downing tackled this project.

Brian Downing and Paul Nelson have also been busy with trouble-shooting loading issues on our ex-Illinois Central GP-11, #8733. This issue is likely in the excitation control card, but we are exhausting any other causes, and looking into repairing the card in-house before we spend a bunch of money on having an outside firm repair it.



As you can see, the mechanical folks are busy as always, with the primary focus being the dining car, and MILW #1649 at this point. We hope to have the genset under the diner before summer is out, so we can at least test-run the unit on the car before winter sets in. As noted, there is much work to do inside the car, and if you happen to like detail and finish work, come on out and lend a hand! Paul would also appreciate any help with putting the NW2 back together so we can get it out of the shop and use it some this season. Many thanks to all of those who have helped out on the mechanical projects at the Museum!



**BE PART OF
THIS PICTURE,
COME OUT AND
VOLUNTEER!!**

(L C L *)

LESS THAN CARLOAD



The downtown depot has taken on a new appearance with the addition of flower boxes along the station platform. This enhances the landscape of our museum site to greet passengers as they step off of the train.



Left: The former Baltimore & Ohio concrete telephone booth will be restored with a telephone link up to Stair Tower.

Right: Member John Sciutto has built a phone booth based on plans from the Illinois Terminal. A telephone has been installed.



MRM volunteers Bill Lygiros and Matt Weaver have restored the former Illinois Terminal motorcar A33, a Fairmont gang car. Both body and motor were rebuilt and is now in service at the museum. A companion motorcar A52, has been restored and painted orange. The motorcar A-33 was assigned to the Bridge & Building Gang at Mc Kinley Junction, Madison, Illinois and motorcar A-52 was originally assigned to the ITC Decatur M of W gang. These are the only ITC motorcars in service by a museum.

This year, come out to the museum and see the improvements made of YOUR museum!!

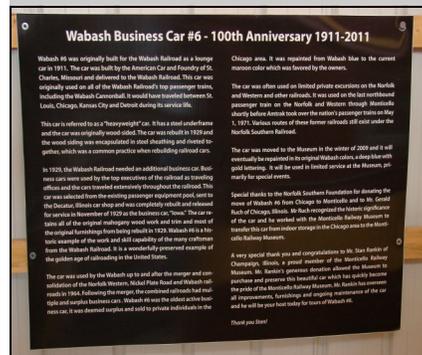


The area north of the Rankin Motorcar Building is the location where small “tykes” have the opportunity to “run” their own railroad. The museum has acquired the track and equipment to make this a permanent “ride” during the annual “Railroad Days” .

Right: Ethan Crouch, Head Tester, is assisting in restoring one of the Hodge Cars.



The Nelson Crossing Car Building is now equipped with an elevated walkway along the number 1 track to provide the opportunity to view the interior of equipment which is not open to the public. A sign (**right**) is secured to the wall across from the displayed car informing the visitor of the history of that car.



A milestone has been reached with the completion of installing Track number 3 in the Nelson Crossing Car Building. At left, the volunteer museum track crew is in the process of drilling the last hole in the rail to apply the angle bars, completing the final track installation. At right, the track number 3 was just a vision. The car building houses passenger cars for display and the operating train set.



Left: Museum member John Downing is the driving force behind the restoration of the E-8 locomotive. He is restoring the body window frame of the fireman side. **Right:** The engineer’s side of the car body has been rebuilt and restored.





On May 18th, the 401 served as a wedding chapel as Mr. & Mrs. John Hotchmuth exchanged wedding vows in the cab. IC Business car No. 7 served as the "get away" car, departing on the 12:30 PM train..



Left: Passengers eagerly await the arrival of steam no. 401 at Nelsons Crossing on this first steam operation of the 2013 season. The restored locomotive is a living history of railroading of a by-gone era.

Above: Covered Hopper NDYX 818202 is part of the fleet of cars being stored on the property for additional revenue .

Below: The display tracks features the past meeting the future.



Safety is not only a set of rules, but a way of life.

**THE
TRAIN
ORDER**

ILLINOIS TERMINAL RAILROAD COMPANY

Order No. 37 Date 9-19

To C & M Train 285 Cherbonville

Train Car and Train Car will meet at

2796 285 and Train 203 1607 will meet at Covenden

2796 285 and Train 97 301 will meet at Covenden

Train Car and Extra will meet at

Extra and Extra will meet at

Extra and Extra will meet at

*Motor 274 and 285 run on late and 2nd
76 from Covenden to East Belt
All have fire at Cherbonville have
arrived and repaired*

CONDUCTOR MOTORMAN TRASS Complete at

Byron Keckler 4859 2180

Form - 413 Old Form 383

**NOTHING
FINER
THAN
DINNER
IN
THE
DINER**



Member Bruce Backus is preparing to install one of four new refrigeration compressors .

The kitchen area is composed of stainless steel and is complete with finished wood.

Tylene Crouch is putting up masking paper in preparation for interior painting.

MONTICELLO
RAILWAY MUSEUM
P O BOX 401
MONTICELLO, ILLINOIS 61856

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTICELLO RAILWAY MUSEUM



ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

STEAM SCHEDULE

August 17th—18th

September 21st— 22nd

October 12th—13th

- [Railroad Days](#) - September 21-22: Come ride our vintage passenger and freight trains on the former Illinois Central and Illinois Terminal trackage.
- [Ghost Train](#) - October 19-20, 25, 26, 27: ALL ages can enjoy a train ride through Camp Creek Hollow with a stop at Cemetery Road... but only the BRAVE should check out our Haunted Boxcar!
- [The Polar Express™](#) - No-
story as the train makes **SOLD OUT** vember 29, 30, December 1, 6, 7 : Read along with the its round-trip journey to the North Pole.
- [Lunch on the Train With Santa](#) - December: 7-8 A train ride and lunch with Santa!!

The museum depends solely on volunteers to make these events happen. Please consider the opportunity to be part of this effort by volunteering. We need your help!! Please contact caller@mrm.org for more information.